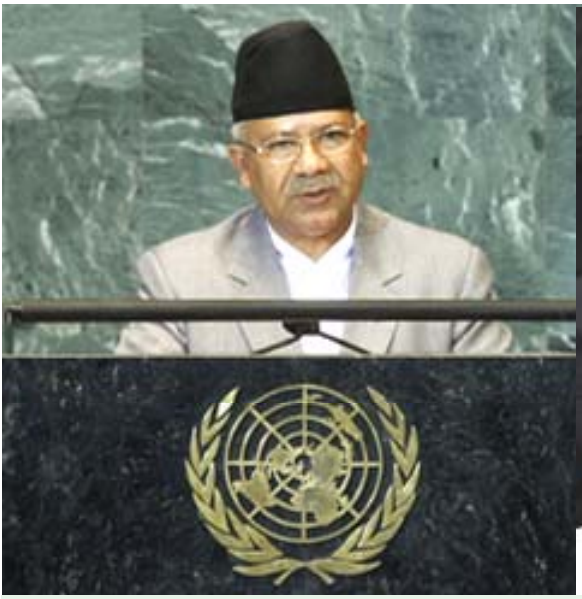
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Nepal's Prime Minister addresses United Nations General Assembly



Prime Minister of Nepal Addresses the UN General Assembly 26 SEP 2009. PHOTO: UN



UN leadership Forum luncheon in connection with climate change summit on 22 SEP 2009. PHOTO: UN

New York, 26 September 2009: MADHAV KUMAR NEPAL, Prime Minister of Nepal, said that, as recognized in the Millennium Declaration, the United Nations was "the indispensable common house of the entire human family". As such, a more efficient and stronger Organization was obviously of common interest. Sovereign equality, territorial integrity, political independence, non-interference and peaceful settlement of international disputes were the bedrock of inter-State relations. As globalization increased the world's interconnectedness, multilateralism offered the best means and opportunity to address the global problems of current times.

Emphasizing that Nepal was in the midst of a political transition, he said its Constituent Assembly of 601 members, who were elected through a mixed-proportional system, had been writing a new, democratic, republican constitution. One of the most inclusive and representative bodies in Nepal's history, it was determined to build consensus among political parties and take the process to the positive conclusion envisaged in the Comprehensive Peace Accord. It was hoped that reconfiguring the State into federal units would be a significant step towards deepening the roots of democracy.

He said his Government had four major tasks: concluding the peace process; writing a new constitution through the Constituent Assembly; gearing up economic development; and managing the people's rising expectations. It was determined to reach the destination of a peaceful, prosperous and stable Nepal, keeping in mind that freedom rang hollow where there was no development, and development lost its soul if it was not

Details in

Full Report on
http://www.un.org/ga/64/generaldebate/pdf/NP_en.pdf

Video: English [RealPlayer, 25 min]
http://webcast.un.org/ramgen/ondemand/ga/64/2009/ga090926am2.rm?start=00:50:10&end=01:15:37

accompanied by freedom. Mindful that failure to provide peace dividends could cause unintended consequences, he requested special support from Nepal's development partners in addressing its post-conflict development challenges.

Since the beginning of its peace process in 2006, Nepal's human rights situation had improved significantly, he said, adding that the Government was determined to establish a truth and reconciliation commission, as well as a disappearance commission, as part of ensuring transitional justice. It also continued to support the United Nations through its Mission in Nepal. Convinced of the importance of peacebuilding in post-conflict countries, Nepal would contribute to the work of the Peacebuilding Commission as a new member of its Organizational Committee.

He stressed that the least developed and landlocked countries were the most vulnerable to the multiple crises facing an increasingly interconnected world. Their special needs called for more specific and enhanced levels of international support. Towards that goal, the outcome of the United Nations conference on the financial and economic crisis should be implemented along with the outcome of the financing for development conference, held last year in Doha. As recognized at the G-20 summit held in London earlier this year, the least developed countries needed their own international financial rescue, especially to ensure that they did not backtrack on prior progress towards achieving the Millennium Development Goals. In preparation for the fourth conference of least developed countries, serious consideration should be given to the implementation status of the Brussels Programme of Action, with a view to tackling all existing obstacles. Full implementation of the Almaty Programme of Action for the Landlocked Developing countries was also needed.

He called the continued lack of progress in the global disarmament agenda "worrying" and hoped that next year's review of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons would foster the necessary momentum towards nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament. Nepal regarded the growing menace of small arms proliferation with equal seriousness. Regional disarmament discourse could help to lay the groundwork for general and complete disarmament. In that context, he urged financial support for the United Nations Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament, established in Kathmandu last year.

More than 100 Haitian orphans receive aid from Nepalese UN peacekeepers



Nepalese troops of the UN mission in Haiti serve food to orphaned children. Photo: MINUSTAH

Kathmandu, 1 September 2009 – Nepalese troops serving with the United Nations mission in Haiti, known as MINUSTAH, have delivered food, clothing and medical care to some 112 orphaned children in a remote mountain village, the UN peacekeeping operation announced today. The blue helmets made the humanitarian trip to Kenskoff, 45 minutes outside the capital Port-au-Prince, on Friday with a medical contingent consisting of a doctor, three nurses and a paramedic.

"For each child we do a health assessment to assess nutritional status, and check their measurements – weight, height, etc.," said military doctor Ritesh Sinha, adding that "nearly 70 per cent of the children examined show severe signs of malnutrition."

The medical team administered treatments ranging from re-hydration solutions and antibiotics to de-worming medicine and anti-bacterial ointments to the orphans living in four separate children's centres in Kenskoff.

The orphans also face food shortages and poor hygienic facilities, as well as a shortage of classrooms and general maintenance problems in the centre, according to a news release issued by MINUSTAH.

"We are here to lend our support to the Haitian people, and this is also shown through food aid and medical care," said Major Thapa Ramkaji, adding that although the troops cannot meet all the children's desperate needs, "we try to make our contribution."

A donation, presented exclusively from the Nepalese contingent of MINUSTAH, included soy-based high energy biscuits and chocolate and new clothes. This latest humanitarian aid effort outside of the capital, Port-au-Prince, was part of regular relief work conducted by MINUSTAH troops to provide assistance to the Caribbean nation's impoverished population.

Geri Halliwell on Mission to Nepal to Highlight Impact of Maternal Death, Injuries

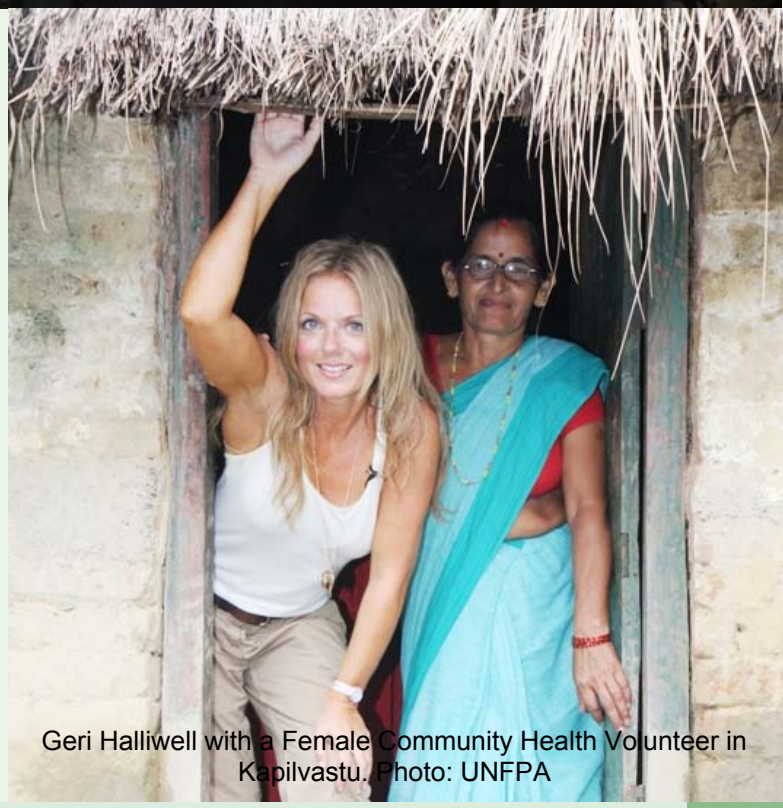


From Left: Geri Halliwell and Prime Minister Madhav Kumar Nepal. Photo: UNFPA

Kathmandu, 9 September 2009: Former Spice Girl, Geri Halliwell, a Goodwill Ambassador of UNFPA, the United Nations Population Fund, visited Nepal from 6 to 9 September to highlight the devastating effects of maternal death and injuries such as uterine prolapse on women in the country.

During the mission, Ms. Halliwell met women who have suffered uterine prolapse and highlighted efforts by Nepalese women, government, health and development workers to promote maternal health and help achieve the Millennium Development Goals.

Ms. Halliwell also joined Nepal's Prime Minister in launching a campaign to stop violence against women. On 9th September the Prime Minister announced the formation of an inter-ministerial committee on gender-based violence that would prepare GoN's plan of action for the 'Year to Stop GBV' (2010). The Prime Minister called on all the political party leaders to join him at the launch of the Year to End GBV in November to sign up to making GBV a cross-party high level priority, and to make their own personal pledges.



Geri Halliwell with a Female Community Health Volunteer in Kapilvastu. Photo: UNFPA

Workshop on Gender Mainstreaming in WATSAN sector held in Kathmandu

Kathmandu, 30 September 2009: The government of Nepal in its National Water Plan-2005 has given special priority to the issue of gender mainstreaming to ensure equal participation and access to drinking Water and Sanitation (WATSAN), said State Minister for Energy, Chandra Singh Bhattarai.

Minister Bhattarai said this while inaugurating a three-day workshop organized by Government of Nepal\ Water and Energy Commission Secretariat (GoN\ WECS) with support of UN HABITAT Water for Asian Cities (WAC) Programme Nepal and in cooperation of Gender Water Alliance (GWA) to enhance awareness on gender mainstreaming in WATSAN sector. According to him, the GoN has formulated short term, mid term and long term plans under the National Water Plan to extend drinking water facility throughout the country.

Kishore Thapa, secretary at WECS told that the plans and policies should be prepared with an integrated approach to ensure equal participation of men and women in all sectors related to water resources including drinking water, hydropower, tourism, irrigation, industries, fish farming, transportation and others.

Dr. Roshan Raj Shrestha, chief technical advisor of South Asia Region, UN HABITAT opined that gender mainstreaming is not being given much priority in practice though the issue of women participation is generally raised as a hot topic for discussion. He stressed on the need of formulating women inclusive action plans in WATSAN sector, and adoption of appropriate strategies for its effective implementation.

At the workshop, representatives from more than 30 WATSAN organizations particularly from government agencies, municipalities and non-government organizations were oriented on gender related issues. The workshop also discussed on current situation of gender in WATSAN sector in Nepal. They were also helped to identify the gender related problems in WATSAN sector, and trained to draft the organizational action plans with reference to gender mainstreaming.

At the end of the workshop, the participants made a common commitment to advocate ensuring gender integration at their respective organization, programme and intervention levels, . And each participants of the workshop also prepared action plans for their organizations. The lessons and experiences of the operational aspects of these prepared action plans will be reviewed in follow up workshops. These lessons and experience of the participants will be the basis for the preparation of the “Resource Book for Gender Mainstreaming in WATSAN Sector in Asia”.



Guest at the inauguration programme.
Photo: UN-HABITAT

UNDP supports early recovery in the flood affected areas



Communities constructing a fish pond under the cash for work programme. Photo: UNDP

In order to support the Koshi flood affected victims start a new livelihood, after their return to their original places, UNDP joined hands with WFP in its Food for Work programme with cash top up in 23 wards of 4 affected Village Development Committees (VDCs)—Shripur, Haripur, Paschim Kushaha and Laukahi.

The District Development Committee(DDC) Sunsari took the lead through the UNDP Quick Impact and Peace Support Initiative (QIPSI) to implement the Cash for Work programme. The joint venture was undertaken to create short term employment for Internally Displaced People. A total of 7484 individuals from 7085 households benefited from this program.



Communities active in maintenance of roads under the Cash for Work Programme. Photo: UNDP

One eligible IDP from each family participated for 50 days in the Food for Work programme and worked on the construction and rehabilitation of public schemes. Preference was given to an eligible female member of a family. The term 'eligible' was defined as the person who is between 18 to 60 years of age and is physically fit to work in intensive labour works.

Each beneficiary received 4 Kgs of rice and 0.5 Kgs of pulses per work day from WFP as Food for Work and NRs. 60 on top of it from the QIPSI to cover other daily needs. The total cash distributed with the support of QIPSI was NRS. 18.1 million. Through the programme, the communities constructed rural roads, irrigation dams, culverts, tube wells and community fish ponds . QIPSI provided support worth NRS 3.4 million to cover the non food activities such as tube wells, culverts etc.

Plantation works along the road and ponds were also undertaken. Deprosc Nepal, an NGO working in the field of recovery and rehabilitation, installed 122 tube wells with UNDP funding support.

Similarly micro infrastructure schemes were also implemented in 23 Wards of the 4 VDCs through the DDC/Local Development Fund with UNDP/QIPSI support worth NRS 9.7 million. There are 550 drinking water tube wells, 17 irrigation shallow tube wells, 22 culverts, 3 schools, 2 community buildings, 2 Madarasas and 7 public toilets constructed.

The Koshi floods in August 2008 left more than 50,000 people homeless in Sunsari, Eastern Nepal,and affected millions in the neighbouring Indian state of Bihar.

Household Centered Environmental Sanitation Programme launched in Nala



Participants at the launch in workshop of Household Centered Environmental Sanitation.

Photo: UN-HABITAT



Dr. Roshan Raj Shrestha delivering speech.
Photo: UN-HABITAT

Dhulikhel, 7 September 2009: A sanitation improvement programme is being carried out in Nala, Kavre using the household centered environmental sanitation (HCES) planning approach for the first time in Nepal. The programme was launched officially by the Constitution Assembly member Krishna Prasad Sapkota on 7 September, 2009 in Dhulikhel.

Addressing the launching programme, Sapkota said that the developmental activities should be planned and implemented properly for the sustainable development of Nala. He further added that the household centered environmental sanitation programme will be the foundation to the improvement of environmental sanitation in the village.

Chief Technical Advisor of UN-Habitat, South Asia, Dr. Roshan Raj Shrestha advised the local residents of Nala to give top priority to the planning phase while preparing the sanitation plan. Further, he said that they should give up the tradition top down approach of planning and that the households and communities should be placed at the center of the planning, identification of technologies and during implementation.

"Local people will be involved from planning to implementation phase of household centered environmental sanitation programme in Nala", said Padma Sundar Joshi, Executive Director of Center for Integrated Urban Development (CIUD). He told that most of programmes in Nepal fail to meet its objectives because the target groups are not given prime consideration at the time of planning.

The household centered environmental sanitation plan will be conducted in ten steps in Nala, said Mingma Gyalzen Sherpa of EAWAG who is coordinating and providing technical support to the HCES programme. As part of the planning process, the programme will assess the baseline sanitation conditions, needs and priorities of individual households and community; identify appropriate sanitation options, and finally draft the environmental sanitation plan. All these steps involve users' participation from the very beginning. The programme initiated in Nala is currently in its fifth stage, said Mingma Sherpa.

The HCES approach is being implemented with technical and financial support of UN HABITAT and the Swiss Federal Institute of Aquatic Science and Technology (EAWAG) in partnership with CIUD and the Nala Integrated Development Committee at the local level. Similar HCES programmes are being implemented in other locations around the world, one in Costa Rica , Central America, one in Burkinas Faso, West Africa, two in East Africa and two in Asia by EAWAG. The HCES approach places households, communities and neighborhood at the centre of the planning process, adopting participatory processes from planning until the implementation stage and in the sustainable operation and management of the infrastructures established. It encompasses an integrated approach where safe water supply, sanitation and hygiene are addressed simultaneously.

MDG Art Competition





School Children participating in poem competition.



Kabhrepalanchowk, 30 September 2009: The United Nations Millennium Campaign, in partnership with National Associations of VDCs in Nepal (NAVIN) is undertaking a pilot project in Rayale VDC of Kavre palanchok district, to develop the VDC into a model MDG village. As part of this program, the VDC in collaboration with NAVIN organized a poem as well as an art competition among school children, regarding the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). The competition helped create awareness among school children on the MDGs and how they could help to internalize MDGs in the planning process of their village.

Twenty students from two secondary, three lower secondary and four primary schools took part in the competitions.

Bagmati Action Plan prepared with support of UN HABITAT



Rivers are easily available surface water sources, habitat for various aquatic flora and fauna, beauty and dignity of human settlements, and, in many cases, hold cultural values as many ritual activities are performed on riparian landscapes. However, rivers in the urban zones of developing countries are getting polluted rapidly in these days.

The river pollution is also appearing as a critical problem in Kathmandu Valley. The chronically polluted Bagmati River and its tributaries have been causing environmental pollution and increasing threat on public health. Despite being major river system with aesthetic and high religious value, it has been turning into open sewage and disposal site of solid waste. Besides, sand extraction from the river and encroachment of river banks by squatters and others are degrading natural phenomena and narrowing the river system.

However, a serious lack of planning, regulations, enforcement, and implementation of appropriate and effective programmes has been realized in this regard. The Ministerial Cabinet of Government of Nepal ratified Bagmati Actional Plan (BAP) on 11 August, 2009 and approved the five-year plan as the official framework document for the development of river system of Kathmandu Valley. The plan had been prepared by Bagmati Civilization Integrated Development Committee (BCIDC), National Trust for Nature Conservation (NTNC) with technical and financial support of UN HABITAT Water for Asian Cities Programme Nepal and United Nation Environment Programme (UNEP) to address the complicated issues of Bagmati conservation.

The Bagmati Action Plan is a five year project that aims to clean the Bagmati river system and its tributaries. Based on the population density, the plan has classified the valley into five different zones- Natural Conservation Core Zone (the hills around the valley), Rural Zone (outermost area of the valley), Peri-urban Zone (area lying between rural and urban core area of the valley), Urban Zone (five municipalities of the valley) and Downstream Zone (from Sundarighat to Katuwal Daha), in order to address the issues of river pollution at micro level, and proposed different activities for different zones.

It has recommended conventional waste water management system for urban core zone. Likewise, Decentralized Wastewater Treatment System (DWTS) has been explained as a new approach for rural and peri-urban zones. The rehabilitation of the existing wastewater treatment plants at different locations of the valley has also been included.

In context of improving environmental sanitation and reducing river pollution at Natural Conservation Core Zone and Urban Zone, the plan has given top priority to onsite sanitation including technologies such as ECOSAN toilet. It has included the faecal sludge management with high priority in some areas as well.

The Bagmati Action Plan has prioritized the promotion of rainwater harvesting, and rehabilitation of existing dug-wells and ponds to recharge ground water with rainwater. The land purchasing and building construction nearby river banks of Bagmati, Nakkhu and Manohara Rivers will be prohibited. According to the plan, the squatter settlement on river banks of peri-urban and urban zone will be relocated and resettled, and the river banks will be protected using bioengineering.

UN Events Calendar for October



2 October: International Day For Natural Disaster Reduction

By resolution 44/236 (22 December 1989), the General Assembly designated the second Wednesday of October International Day for Natural Disaster Reduction. The International Day was to be observed annually during the International Decade for Natural Disaster Reduction, 1990-1999. In 2001, the General Assembly decided to maintain the observance of the International Day for Natural Disaster Reduction on the second Wednesday of October (resolution 56/195 of 21 December), as a vehicle to promote a global culture of natural disaster reduction, including disaster prevention, mitigation and preparedness. http://www.un.org/Depts/dhl/disaster

9 October: World Post Day

http://www.upu.int/world_post_day/en/index.shtml

10 October: World Mental Health Day

16 October: World Food Day

World Food Day was proclaimed in 1979 by the Conference of the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO). It marks the date of the founding of FAO in 1945. The aim of the Day is to heighten public awareness of the world food problem and strengthen solidarity in the struggle against hunger, malnutrition and poverty. In 1980, the General Assembly endorsed observance of the Day in consideration of the fact that "food is a requisite for human survival and well-being and a fundamental human necessity" (resolution 35/70 of 5 December 1980). http://www.un.org/Depts/dhl/food/index.html



17 October: International Day For The Eradication Of Poverty

The International Day for the Eradication of Poverty has been observed every year since 1993, when the General Assembly, by resolution 47/196, designated this day to promote awareness of the need to eradicate poverty and destitution in all countries, particularly in developing countries - a need that has become a development priority. http://www.un.org/depts/dhl/poverty

24 October: United Nations Day

The anniversary of the entry into force of the United Nations Charter -- 24 October 1945 -- has been celebrated as United Nations Day since 1948. It has traditionally been marked throughout the world by meetings, discussions and exhibits on the achievements and goals of the Organization. In 1971, the General Assembly recommended that Member States observe it as a public holiday (resolution 2782 (XXVI)). http://www.un.org/events/unday/2006/background.html

24 October: World Development Information Day

The United Nations General Assembly instituted World Development Information Day at its twenty-seventh session in December 1972 with the object of drawing the attention of world public opinion each year to development problems and the necessity of strengthening international co-operation to solve them. The General Assembly also decided that World Development Information Day should coincide, in principle, with United Nations Day to stress the central role of development in the work of the United Nations.